(b) and (c) Adequate foodgrains are allocated to various States/Union Territories including Rajasthan under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other food based welfare schemes to ensure food security in the country. The implementation of TPDS is the joint responsibility of Central and State Governments whereas implementation of various welfare schemes is monitored by the concerned nodal Ministries/Departments. Government of Rajasthan has also introduced 'Food Stamp Yojana' in 2004 to ensure that no one dies due to hunger in the State. Under the scheme, 100 coupons for 10 kg. wheat each, are provided to Sarpanch of each Gram Panchayat, which are distributed to persons who may be at the verge of starvation. These can be presented to Fair Price Shops for obtaining 10 kg. wheat free of cost. The implementation of the scheme is monitored through the agency of the District Collectors and District Supply Officers.

Fire in Gir National Park

4687. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fire broke out around March 13, 2005, in the Gir National Park and Sanctuary in Gujarat; if so the reason therefor;

(b) the extent of damage to flora and fauna in the Sanctuary caused thereby;

(c) whether any inquiry has been held into the fire;

(d) the steps taken to make good the loss and protect and preserve it against further damage; and

(e) the latest report about the presence of the Asiatic lion and other big cats in the Park and the sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes Sir. The has reported that an accidental fire broke out on March 13, 2005 in the Gir National Park and Sanctuary in Gujarat.

(b) An area of 84.8 hectares was affected by fire. No damage to flora and fauna has been reported except burning of dried grass and leaves.

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) The following steps have been taken to make good the loss and protect and preserve it against further damage:—

(i) Fire lines are prepared along the forest roads and across the forest.

(ii) Fire fighter teams are deployed at sensitive points.

(iii) Forest watchers are deployed in the hills for early detection of forest fire.

(iv) Fire towers are erected to detect the forest fires.

(v) The forest area is well linked with the modern wireless network.

(vi) The field officers and employees are provided with vehicles to acess the forest fire sites.

(vii) Programs of environment education and awareness are carried out through nature education camps and meeting with villagers.

(viii) Forest personnel are trained for fire prevention and combating forest fires.

(ix) Intensive patrolling by staff.

(x) Regulation of traffic by staff.

(e) The latest estimation of Asiatic lion and leopard population in Gir National Park, Sanctuary and adjoining forest and rural areas, as reported by the State, are as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the species	Population (Numbers)
1	Asiatic Lion	291
2	Leopard	222

Tribals Dependent on Forests

†4688. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage and number of tribals still dependent on forests;

(b) the steps Government are taking to promote natural production of precious forest herbs by the tribals; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.